

**BDAC Ecosystem Restoration Work Group  
Meeting Summary  
January 29, 1997**

The tenth meeting of the BDAC Ecosystem Work Group was held on Wednesday January 29, 1997 at the Resource Building from 9:00 a.m. to noon.

*(Some attendees who arrived late and/or who did not sign in are not listed below)*

BDAC Members of the Work Group present were:

Mary Selkirk, Chair                      Ann Notthoff

Invited Participants of the Work Group present were:

Nat Bingham	Gary Bobker	Bruce Herbold
Frank Wernette	Sally Shanks	

CALFED Staff/Consultant Team present were:

Dick Daniel	Cindy Darling	David Fullerton
Sharon Gross	Eugenia Laychak	Rick Soehren
Peter Standish-Lee	Scott Wilcox	Greg Young

Other Participants included:

Neal Bergquist	Robert Clark	Kristin Cooper-Carter
Steve Hirsch	Liz Howard	Jan Jennings
Lance Johnson	Steve Johnson	John Kopchik
Marc Luesebrink	Roger Masuda	Michael McGowan
John Mills	Robert Mirrow	Joe Miyamoto
Kent Nelson	Elizabeth Patterson	Larry Pucket
Robin Reynolds	Nancy Schaefer	Kelly Tennis
Phil Unger	Greg Wang	Jeff Phipps
Roberta Borgonovo		

Several draft documents including *CALFED Vision for the Butte Basin Ecological Zone* discussion paper, a summary of comment letters received on ecosystem objectives, and the *Summary of Restoration and Management Plans Pertaining to the Ecological Resources of the Bay-Delta and Its Watershed* were distributed to the Work Group at the start of the meeting.

Mary Selkirk, the Work Group chair, opened the meeting and asked for Dick Daniel to provide an overview of the schedule for development of the Ecosystem Restoration Program Plan (ERPP).

## **Ecosystem Restoration Program Plan**

Dick began his overview with a discussion of compatibility of ecosystem restoration goals with flood management. For instance, levee setbacks can provide additional flood management space as well as necessary habitat area. Dick noted that many of the areas that experienced flooding problems were areas with constrictions in stream courses with no habitat areas. Dick continued on to discussed some scheduling deadlines for development of the ERPP in context of the Programmatic EIR/EIS. A draft of the ERPP containing objectives, targets and visions will be made available on February 27 in anticipation of the March 12 BDAC meeting. The Work Group agreed to move the next Work Group meeting on February 26 to March 5 to provide Work Group members an opportunity to review the February 27 draft ERPP.

Dick also noted that impact analysis is scheduled to begin on February 15. Some confusion was expressed by Work Group members with regard to this date as it was their understanding that impact analysis was not to begin until sometime in March.

Dick told the Work Group that an ecosystem restoration component workshop will be held on April 8. A more complete draft of the ERPP, including lists of indicators, discussions of implementation and phasing, and an adaptive management program framework, will be made available prior to April 8.

This brought the Work Group to a discussion of the ambitious schedule being set by CALFED for development of an ERPP. There was significant concern about the pace of the schedule and it was noted that this ecosystem restoration program is one of a kind and is the key to the success of CALFED. There are numerous technical experts who should have an opportunity to review and comment on the ERPP as it is developed, however, the rapid time line limits this necessary input. Some suggested that the stakeholder and public interest community should lobby for CALFED to allow appropriate time for development of this key element of the CALFED Bay-Delta Program. It was stated that a good comfort level among stakeholders of the ERPP is essential to the success of the Program and to gain public approval of restoration financing.

A question was raised about the ability to include information or a rating for how well restoration actions can also provide flood management benefits. Dick responded that this is an important issue and is being included as part of component integration. The CALFED staff is discussing the potential for additional benefits of one site versus another. However, this needs to be done in ways so as not to appear to predetermine the outcome of the EIS/EIR and CALFED does not want to prioritize sites based solely on additional flood management benefits.

## Comments Received on the *Implementation Objectives and Targets* Document

Mary moved the Work Group to the next agenda item which included an overview of comments received on the *Implementation Objectives and Targets* document. Comments received generally falls in the following ten groups:

- Scope of Program
- Land Use Management
- Substance of Targets
- Coordination with Other Programs
- Flow Patterns
- Hatcheries
- Numerical Targets
- Magnitude of Habitat Restoration
- Exotic Species
- Stakeholder Input

Regarding the Scope of the Program, some commented that more of the San Francisco Bay should be included as well as more of the water service areas. Dick stated that CALFED staff will include consideration for funding of areas of the Bay if they provide habitat that is necessary for species that rely on the Delta system (i.e., Delta smelt habitat in the North Bay). If a problem is manifest in or closely related to the Delta, it will be included.

Regarding Land Use Management, there were comments that restoration plans need to have “real world” relevance. Plans need to coordinate with local land use efforts. Some felt that the CALFED Program should make land use recommendations a part of the ERPP. Dick commented that such recommendations will be included as will coordination with local land use authorities. Dick stated that the synergistic benefits of agriculture to California’s economy as well as the environment should also be recognized. To this end, the ERPP will look at preservation of prime agricultural land as a buffer from urban development. A question was asked about recreational boating and the placement of new boating facilities. Dick stated that a vision paper is being written regarding how CALFED can help influence the placement of new facilities.

Comments regarding targets varied from statements that targets are not broad enough to statements that they are not specific enough. Dick indicated that CALFED intends to include target ranges in the ERPP that reasonably capture the realistic potential.

The issue of coordination with other programs raised several comments. Concern was expressed over the possibility of CALFED forcing local entities to implement actions that may be contrary to locally developed and agreed upon actions. For instance, efforts to improve river health along the Tuolumne River is being worked on by a number of local agencies and stakeholders as well

as state and federal representatives (this is related to FERC mandate). Agreement reached through this forum should not be disregarded by CALFED's objectives. Dick commented that the ERPP is intended to compliment such activities and to make even more improvements feasible (i.e., through additional funding). CALFED actions will not make upstream conditions worse (for either ecosystem or stakeholders). Concern was expressed that upstream actions were being included because they were more economical than in-Delta actions. Dick stated that this was not true. Rather, upstream actions are included because they are part of the problem areas as much as they are part of the solution area. The Delta should be viewed as the "symptom area."

One participant commented that hatcheries will continue to be a necessary part of the fisheries actions because it is not possible to increase natural production enough to offset the benefit of current hatcheries. What is needed, however, is adaptation of hatchery programs to best fit into an overall fishery solution.

The agricultural sector expressed a desire for an assurance to limit the amount of land that is removed from production for restoration purposes. Concern was expressed that if an ERPP results in a quantity of land being converted, that should be the extent and more land should not be targeted in the future.

### **Implementation Levels**

Dick went on to present an overview of "Implementation Levels". A handout of the Butte Basin vision was provided as an example. All of the visions are scheduled for release on February 27. The intent of the "implementation levels" (contained on pages 14 and 15 in the draft) is to categorize targets into one of three groups: high scientific certainty, moderate scientific certainty, and needs more technical evaluation. Concern was expressed by some that the bullets included in these three boxes for this example were not targets but were more like objectives. Dick asked that the group not focus on the bullets but rather the method of presenting levels of scientific certainty. It was generally agreed upon by the group that some kind of sorting of targets was necessary. However, it was stated, endpoints should be established to show that the implementation of targets collectively help reach a planned endpoint. It was noted that emphasis needs to be placed on the fact that this sorting is not an exercise in prioritizing actions. Rather, this will allow targets to be planned and implemented as best fits their category of certainty. It was stressed that the purpose of this categorization is to provide some public disclosure on our level of scientific certainty and not a prioritization exercise. If we allow it to be viewed as such, people will lobby for their project to be in the first box, regardless of their level of scientific certainty and efficacy.

A request to include a reference date with each of the visions was made. It was felt that because of changing conditions, especially in regard to site specific conditions, as is the case with the visions, an "as of date" would help set the information presented in the proper context. For

instance, recent storms have washed out some dams on one stream course. Such information may or may not be included for each geographically specific vision.

A suggestion was also made to make the visions and other printed material available in electronic format to make distribution within stakeholders groups easier. CALFED staff stated that specific requests for electronic copies can easily be accommodated.

### **Next Meetings**

The next meetings were set for the following dates (from 9 a.m. to noon):

- March 5, 1997 (**please note revision from previously scheduled February 26 date**)
- March 26, 1997
- April 30, 1997

The March 5 meeting will focus on:

- Discussion of the draft objectives, targets and visions in the ERPP
- Requested schedule extensions and desire for appropriate technical input